the king concealed this most precious treasure in her hair, and escaped with it to Ceylon, where it was received with all due honour, and enshrined in a magnificent casket. When we got possession of the island, we immediately took charge of the palladium, a guard was appointed to watch over it, and the key of the chamber where it was kept was never out of the possession of the chief commissioner of Kandy. As you will see by the last papers from the East, we have got tired of the charge, and the new governor, Lord Torrington, has handed over possession of it to the priests, to take care of for themselves.

These relics were always enshrined and kept in topes or dagobas, of one of which I have a drawing here. A tope is a tumulus or, to speak more correctly, it bears the same relation to a tumulus that a stone altar does to a stone coffin, or sarcophagus,—the one is meant for the burial of a body, the other is a simulated tomb meant to contain a relic, which may be a bone, or a whole skeleton, or a vessel, or bit of cloth—any thing, indeed, that has become particularly sacred.

A tope consists always of three parts—first, a circular base or *drum*, a *dome*, and lastly, a *tee*, or ornament on the top, supporting an umbrella of state, sometimes there are nine of them. These often vary in height, the oldest being the lowest, and the tendency being always to make them taller and taller as we descend in the series.

The principal relic is always deposited in a small chamber, exactly under the centre of the buildings, at the height of the springing of the dome. Sometimes a second and third deposit has been found, one above another, which led the celebrated German geographer Ritter to propose the theory that the topes were like the Chinese towers, built in three, six, or nine stories, a conjecture that shewed he was in the right path of inquiry, though I believe that he was mistaken, the true explanation being, that when a second similar relic was found, instead of building a new tope, it was placed in a chamber on the top of the old one, and a new casing added to the whole, in this manner, and so on, with a third or fourth if requisite. This was the conclusion M. Masson arrived at, from his extensive researches among the topes in Afghanistan,—and in Burmah such is even now the current belief of the priests. I have here, for instance, a drawing of the famous pagoda of Rangoon, said originally to have been a small building, but increased successively, to contain the staff of one Buddha, the water dipper of a second, the bathing garment of a third, and eight hairs from the head of the last.

When the great tope at Manikyala-Taxila, in the Punjab, was opened by General Ventura, the principal deposit was found surrounded by coins of a king, known to have lived about the Christian era: an upper one was surrounded by those of the Assacidæ. The principal relic was contained in a small gold cylinder, inclosed in a copper one, and consisted of some fragments apparently of amber, in a brown liquid, though it has never been correctly ascertained what they were.

In all the larger structured topes, the tee has been destroyed, but we have abundance of representations of them in the sculpture of the caves and their paintings, and also in the rock cut topes, to know what they were. In the oldest caves they consisted of a cubical basement, supporting one or three discs, or umbrellas of wood; one of these still exists at Carli, though probably from fifteen to eighteen centuries old. At Ajunta we have the same form repeated in stone, and a model of one was found in the chamber of a tope in Afghanistan, now in the museum of the India-house, with nine discs. Afterwards the tee became all-important, the domical basement having gradually gone out of use, and the nine-storied towers, such as the famous porcelain tower at Nankin, are merely exaggerated tees, without the topes they were once meant to adorn. I have not drawings here sufficient to point out all the steps of this transformation, but I have seen every step of it, and have here a drawing published some years ago by the Asiatic Society, in which you will see a tope surrounded by a nine-storied tee of almost the exact form of those in China.

The circular inclosure that surrounds, or at least did always surround, these topes, is another peculiarity, I must not omit to mention. In the instance I have selected for illustration, that at Sanchee: it consists of upright pillars, about 11 feet high, joined at the top by a transverse piece, and between each pillar there are inserted three bars of stone,—a peculiarity, as far as I know, that does not exist in any other structural building *now standing*, but it must have been very common, for, as a moulding, this singular form exists in every ancient cave or building I am acquainted with, and is by far the most common moulding found.

Owing to the facility with which it can be removed, this inclosure is not found in any of the topes in Afghanistan; but in Ceylon, where topes are still respected, almost all of them have it. The pillars, however, are not generally joined at top, but stand in one, two, or three concentric rows, round the monument. In some instances almost more important than the monument itself, as in this one of the Tmpuramaya.

Sometimes these circles became the principal or only object at an Amravati, on the Kistna, which is only a large circle, of large sculptured stones, some of which are in the India-house,—in the centre of which there is now a tank, but whether that is the original design or not I cannot say.

Another peculiarity of the Buddhist religion is their veneration for sacred places, to mark which they frequently erected towers, similar in form to topes, but in the ruined state in which they are now found it is difficult to detect the difference till after the tronble is taken to open them, when, no relic existing in the centre, the explorer, after all this vain trouble, discovers that he has been working on a stupha, which is the proper name of these monumental towers, while dagoba is the one that, were I not afraid of multiplying hard names, should be applied to those that contain relics.

The gateways are another peculiarity of this monument deserving notice, as they are the only ones now standing in India, and from their top-heavy form it is wonderful they have stood so long. From their form, it is evident they must be copies of wooden erections; indeed among the frescoes of Aunta there is represented a wooden one, very similar in form to this. The wooden one, however, may be merely a cheaper form of accomplishing the object wanted, in which case this must be considered as an elaborate Trilithon.

They are all covered with sculpture of the most elaborate kind, representing emblems and the objects of Buddhist worship, but, owing to their antiquity, no images of Buddha himself.

One of the four has fallen, and as it contains historical bassi-relievi, representing, among other things, a siege of a town, in which the dress of the warriors and their arms, as well as the forms of the houses, and other interesting peculiarities, exist, I wish much it could be conveyed to England, as it would convey a very different idea of Indian art to the public than anything that has yet been brought to this country.

Be this as it may, these gateways are the originals of the Paiioos of the Chinese, or, as they are usually called by Europeans, triumphal archways, which generally stand in the market-places of towns in China.

Another class of Buddhist monuments to which I must now call your attention are the chaityas, or churches of that religion. In India we know them only as caves, and in consequence I will always call them chaitya caves. The finest and most perfect one in India is that at Carli, of which I have here a plan and section; it is 102 ft. 3 in. in length internally, and 45 ft. 7 in. in width. Like all these caves, it bears a striking resemblance in disposition to the choir of old Norman churches—consisting always of a centre and two side aisles, terminating in a semicircle, in the centre of which is placed the altar, which, in this instance, is always a tope or dagoba: whether these rock-cut examples contained relics or not I cannot say,—certainly not in their interior, for if the rock were once opened, the fracture could not be concealed. But they all shew traces of being covered with woodwork and ornaments of some sort, and the relic may have been placed in a chasse of some sort in front of the dagoba. In the most modern ones, a figure of Buddha stands in front of it, but the existence of this is a certain sign that we are arrived at an age when idolatry had superseded the more purely Buddhist doctrine of relic worship.

To the chaitya caves I shall return presently when speaking of their construction, and shall therefore now pass on to the only remaining class of monuments with which I will now trouble you, and these are viharas, or monasteries, which always accompany these chaitya caves. Generally, there are three or four, or more monasteries to each church, and often the monasteries exist alone, without any chaitya cave in the series, though the converse is, I believe, never the case.

The earliest of these viharas are mere cells, cut in the rock, where one or two ascetics might dwell—one of the most singular being the tiger cave at Cuttack, which is a rock cut into the form of a tiger's head, the expanded jaws forming the verandah, and a doorway where the throat should be, leading to the cell.

In the next stage they became a long cell, with a long verandah; then gradually the cell became a hall, supported by four, twelve, sixteen, or twenty-four pillars, with the cells arranged round them. In this case, however, opposite the entrance is always placed a sanctum, in which is a figure of Buddha, as an object of worship: and in the more modern times side-chapels are also provided, in which are statues of inferior saints. Generally speaking, the walls and roofs of all these monasteries are decorated with fresco paintings, representing either historical subjects, as battle pieces or great ceremonials, or scenes from the life of Buddha, or of the peculiar saints to whom the Vihara may be more particularly dedicated.

J. FERGUSSON.

THE ITALIAN OPERA HOUSE, COVENT GARDEN.

A CORRESPONDENT remarks, "last week you spoke generally of the object and effect of the alterations at the Italian Opera House. It will not be uninteresting to your readers if this week you record what work those alterations involved, and the short time in which they were made. Such notices prepare architects and builders for similar works, and let them know how much can be done in a little time when absolutely necessary." We willingly follow out the suggestion.

The parapet, roof, and ceiling of the refreshment room being in extent 62 feet by 28 feet (out and out), were removed, and a new ceiling and an entirely new building, raised on the old walls, to a height of 32 feet to the ridge. The second amphitheatre and gallery, with two boxes on each side, were taken away, and a new amphitheatre reconstructed at a much greater angle, capable of holding upwards of 600 people, an area about 57 feet by 47 feet. The south wall (supporting the roof of the theatre and carpenter's workshop), was pulled down to the extent of 54 feet in length by 30 feet in height, and 3 feet 6 inches thick. The roof and floor were shored up, and a timber truss, 53 feet span, introduced, into which the timbers of the roof and floor were reframed. The order was given on the 8th February. The works commenced on the 9th; were completed and certified by the official referees on the 7th March, and the last instalment due on the contract paid on the 8th!

When it is remembered that the whole was executed at a height of 60 feet from the paving line of street, without in any way interfering with the body of the theatre, the only approaches being up a narrow passage and the old gallery stairs; and we take into consideration the wet weather at the end of February and commencement of March, which retarded the progress of the works, it will be seen that some credit is due to the parties concerned, for the short time occupied.

Mr. R. J. Hodgson was the architect employed, and Mr. Holland the builder.

AN ERUDITE BRICKLAYER.—A bricklayer, who was employed by the parochial authorities of a village in the Western district to erect, or as it is technically termed, hang two coppers to supply the poor with soup during the severe season, sent in his bill in this form:—

"The genteelmen of —— dr. to John Jackson.

To hanging 2 *coopers* to make soup for the poo."

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